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REPORT

ON THE

SECOND WAGE CENSUS

OF THE

NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE

TAKEN IN

DECEMBER 1917.

PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY.

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PESHAWAR:
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PESHAWAR:

Report on the 2nd Wage Census of the North-West Frontier Province taken in December 1917.

The first wage census of the North-West Frontier Province was taken in December 1912 and the second wage census, to which the present report relates, was held in December 1917. Some delay has occurred in the publication of the results owing to various causes, but principally in consequence of the receipt of defective and inaccurate returns, which required scrutiny and correction in communication with districts. Under the standing instructions for the holding of the census any serious disturbing cause should lead to its postponement. The War with its far-reaching effects in every department of labour and employment might well have been held to be such a cause, but for the fact that it is impossible to foretell when, if ever, wages will return to pre-War rates. It was decided, therefore, to undertake the census at the fixed interval of five years, the two previous harvests of the year only varying slightly from the normal.

Wages in Towns.

General town rates.

2. The enquiry relating to wages in urban areas was carried out in the two most important towns of the Province, namely Peshawar and Dera Ismail Khan, as at the preceding census.

The selected classes of artizans as well as unskilled labourers were counted in the above towns under Tahsil arrangements and the result of the enumeration is given in columns (2) and (4) of Table A. Small as is the number of workers in Dera Ismail Khan there have been considerable fluctuations amongst them. Workers in iron and hardware and unskilled labourers are both reported to be only one-third the numbers that they were five years ago. The reasons given are that owing to military construction in Tank labourers have emigrated in large numbers to that place, while the completion of works, both public and private, in Dera Ismail Khan city is suspended owing to the financial stringency created by the War. In Peshawar the numerical fluctuations are not marked, but here again workers in iron and hardware are not as numerous as they were, while masons and builders and unskilled labourers have lost a quarter of their number.

The wages of the selected classes of workers shown in Table A have altered as follows since the last census:—

CLASS OF WORKERS.	PERCENTAGE OF INCREASE OR DECREASE.	
	Peshawar town.	*Dera Ismail Khan town.*
1. Workers in iron and hardware	...+ 11	+ 26
2. Brass, copper & bell metal workers	...− 17	− 12
3. Carpenters	...− 5	− 18
4. Cotton weavers (hand industry)	...+ 67	+100
5. Masons and builders ...	... ...	+ 6
6. General labour (unskilled)	...+ 33	+ 38

In face of the other increases in wages the decrease in the case of the daily rates for brass, copper and bell metal workers and carpenters is noticeable. It may, perhaps, be due to exceptionally high rates having been reported for these classes in the previous quinquennium and scarcity of metal may also have led to less demand for the services of the former. But it is difficult to believe that the average rate of a carpenter's wages in Dera Ismail Khan town is only 14 annas, as now reported, when unskilled labour earns 9 annas a day there. The cotton weavers of Dera Ismail Khan may be left out of consideration as there are not a dozen in the town; but in Peshawar the increased gains of this class are the outcome, of course, of the abnormal prices of imported and manufactured cloth, which have brought about some revival of the indigenous industry.

Generally speaking, if regard be had to the larger demand for labour owing to the War, the rise in the prices of necessaries of life and the gradual increase in the standard of comfort of the people, the increases shown above are not remarkable in any class of labourers except cotton weavers and have not advanced proportionately to the cost of living.

Comparison with rural rates.

3. As in the previous quinquennium the urban rates are lower than the corresponding rural rates in the case of carpenters and masons, but they are higher for unskilled labourers. The skilled labourers mentioned usually command better pay in villages, as they are naturally attracted to and are more numerous in the towns, where they can expect continuous employment. On the other hand it is easy to see that the rates for unskilled labour must ordinarily be lower in rural tracts owing to the dislike of agricultural labourers to seek work far afield, the greater cheapness of living at their own homes and the fact that many of them are in the permanent employment of land-owners.

Peshawar city rates and Lahore rates

4. A comparison of present rates in Peshawar with those in the neighbouring capital of Lahore gives interesting results. In the previous quinquennium the rates of wages of all classes of labourers in Peshawar city were higher than those in Lahore, but they are now identical in both places, namely 16 to 24 annas per diem for all classes except cotton weavers (hand industry) and unskilled labourers. The respective rates of these two latter classes now range between 16-24 annas and 10-14 annas in Peshawar against 12-16 annas and 7-11 annas in Lahore. In the previous quinquennium the increase of the Peshawar rates over the Lahore rates for the former class amounted to 85 per cent, but has now fallen to 43 per cent.

Rural Wages.

Method of enquiry and general village rates.

5. The 427 villages selected in 1912 were again chosen for the present quinquennial enquiries, all being outside a radius of 10 miles from Peshawar and Dera Ismail Khan towns. Kanungos were employed for the purpose under the orders of the Deputy Commissioners, but the number of villages did not exceed 12 in any Kanungo's circle. The wages paid to the representative classes are shown in Tables B and C. The money equivalents of all supplements, where such payments are made, have been included in the cash wages. The following table exhibits the percentage of increase in the wages of each class of rural workers as compared with the last census :—

District.	Percentage of Increase.				
	Carpenters.	Blacksmiths	Masons.	Unskilled labourers.	Plough-men.
Hazara	+ 60	+ 33	+ 100	+ 20	...
Peshawar	+ 9	+ 20	+ 9	+ 33	+ 9
Kohat	+ 66	+ 66	+ 25	+ 60	+ 7
Bannu	+ 20	+ 133	+ 20	+ 50	+ 25
Dera Ismail Khan ...	+ 25	+ 25	+ 25	+ 33	+ 25

Rural labour, unskilled.

6. The daily cash rates range between 4 and 11 annas as shown in table B, but the most common rates are 8 annas in Peshawar, Kohat and Dera Ismail Khan and 6 annas in Bannu and Hazara. The rate of 6 annas paid in the last two districts corresponds with that prevailing in the adjoining Punjab districts of Rawalpindi, Attock and Mianwali. The higher wage in Peshawar, Kohat and Dera Ismail Khan districts is uniform with the most common rate of 8 annas in the Punjab. The rise has been general throughout

the Province, though more accentuated in the South than the North. The Agricultural Officer, North-West Frontier Province, reports that the labourers employed at the Government Experimental Farm at Tarnab earn still higher wages than those above given, but this seems to be due to the proximity of the farm to Peshawar City.

Payment in kind is reported in only seven villages out of the total number of villages selected for enquiry, so this method of payment is now disappearing subject to certain exceptions, as in Bannu for instance, where the *kasha*, or labourer hired for canal work, takes from 2 to 5 per cent of the gross produce.

Comparison with cooly labour at Railway stations in rural tracts.

7. As at the previous census the earnings of coolies employed at selected Railway stations were ascertained so that these rates might be compared with the rates for unskilled labour reported from districts. Advantage was taken of the extension of branches of the North-Western Railway into the districts of Hazara and Bannu for the prosecution of enquiries at the Railway stations in these districts as well as Peshawar and Kohat, where such enquiries were previously made, but only maundage rates were reported in Bannu. The results are tabulated below :—

Serial No.	Railway Station.	District.	Daily earnings of station coolies. Permanent. 1912 As.	Ps.	Permanent. 1917 As.	Ps.	Temporary. 1912 As.	Ps.	Temporary. 1917 As.	Ps.
1	Akora	Peshawar ...	...	...	...	...	12	0	8 (1 and 2)	0
2	Pabbi	Peshawar ...	...	...	...	...	12	0		
3	Takht-i-Bai ...	Peshawar ...	6	11	6	11	...	...	...	...
4	Khairabad ...	Peshawar ...	6	5	5	5	...	...	...	...
5	Nowshera ...	Peshawar ...	6 to 7	5 to 6	6 to 8	11 to 0	12	0	...	...
6	Haripur ...	Hazara ...	...	...	6 to 6	5 to 11	...	...	...	...
7	Havelian ...	Hazara ...	...	...	6	5	...	...	...	...
8	Kohat	Kohat ...	6	5	6	9	...	...	...	...
9	Hangu ...	Kohat ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6 to 8	0 to 0
10	Thal	Kohat ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	5 to 7	0 to 0
11	Laki-Marwat ...	Bannu ...	...	...	...	...	The work is done by contractors at maundage rates.			
12	Naurang Serai ...	Bannu ...	...	...	...	...				
13	Gandi Khan Khel ...	Bannu ...	...	...	...	...				

Permanent coolies are paid at monthly rates, but for the purpose of comparison daily earnings have been worked out by dividing the monthly rates by 30. The wages given, therefore, are probably lower than those which would be paid for casual labour. The permanent and the temporary rates, however, at the railway stations on the old as well as the newly extended railway lines do not show any marked variation from the corresponding district rates.

8. Carpenters, though their skill is not of a high order, are found in all rural tracts, and they also do the work of masons and blacksmiths in certain villages, especially in Kohat, where the *Karigar*, as he is called, combines the duties of carpenter and blacksmith in all except the more important villages. Daily payments for blacksmith's work are infrequent in all the districts except Kohat and Hazara. Both carpenters and blacksmiths, it must be remembered, are generally remunerated by a share of the produce at harvest time for their work in supplying and repairing agricultural implements and the woodwork of wells. Cash payments to them, as a rule, relate to other work, though in Bannu the system of a daily wage for work performed is gradually replacing that of harvest payments. Carpenters are only reported to earn such a wage in two-thirds of the villages selected for investigation and blacksmiths in one-third. The rates are reported to be the same for all three classes of artizans throughout the Province, namely 16, 20 and 24 annas for carpenters, masons and blacksmiths respectively. The rate of 28 annas quoted for blacksmiths in the Bannu District is to be found in only three villages of one Kanungo's circle, and cannot be regarded as typical of the rest of the district. The most common wages paid to artizans in this Province generally exceed those current in the adjoining districts of the Punjab, where they vary between 11 and 22 annas a day.

Rural labour, skilled. Village artizans.

9. All districts except Hazara report monthly wages for ploughmen, but the number of villages where such rates have been ascertained to exist is only about one-quarter of the total number of selected villages. As proved to be the case in the wages survey of 1912, any satisfactory estimate of the wages of ploughmen has again been a difficult matter owing to the grant by employers of various kinds of supplements in kind. Cash wages by themselves are infrequent. Including the value of supplements, payments may be accepted as generally ranging between Rs. 6 and Rs. 15 per mensem.

Rural labour, skilled. Ploughmen.

10. The cash wages of unskilled labourers are scarcely anywhere supplemented by payments in kind except in Peshawar, where these labourers are usually given a meal once or twice a day. One meal generally costs from 1 to 2 annas. Artizans and ploughmen are everywhere granted supplements and the system is especially popular in the case of the latter class. Artizans expect and get better food. They receive, as a rule, one or two meals a day of the value of 3 to 10 annas against 2 to 8 annas reported in the previous quinquennium. The food given to ploughmen is that of village labourers and its monthly value ranges from Rs. 3 to Rs. 8. In certain villages in the Dera Ismail Khan District wheat, wheat flour, curry, salt &c., costing Rs. 4 to Rs. 4-12-0, are provided instead of meals. A ploughman also is usually given a separate house free, the monthly rent of which may be put at 8 annas. Clothing, bedding and shoes of varying values are also supplied to him according to the customs prevailing in different villages.

Supplements.

11. The figures given in this report show very clearly the considerable advance which has taken place in the wages earned by nearly every kind of labour. Such causes as recruitment for the army, the larger military garrison with its varied needs and the extension of railway communications have contributed each in their way to this rise throughout the Province. Labour also tends to grow more independent and more able to make its own terms, while the great spread of primary education in recent years is leading inevitably to the adjustment of relations between employers and employed on the basis of contract rather than on custom and tradition. But the main reason for the enhanced payment of labour has been the universal increase in the cost of living. The average prices of the staple food grains of wheat, jowar and maize for the previous and present quinquennium in the two representative

General.

districts of Peshawar and Dera Ismail Khan illustrate the rise in the price of foodstuffs. They are as follows :—

Period.	Retail prices in rupees per maund.					
	Peshawar.			*Dera Ismail Khan.*		
	Wheat.	Jowar.	Maize.	Wheat.	Jowar.	Bajra.
	Rs	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Average of 1908-12 ...	3·76	2·81	2·76	3·38	2·83	2·66
Average of 1913-17 ...	4·19	3·3	3·21	4·11	3·21	3·17
Increase per cent ...	+11	+18	+16	+22	+13	+19

The increase in the cost of such other necessities of life as salt and cotton clothing has been still more marked. The Province has never been self contained in the matter of labour and on the whole it is perhaps surprising that the combination at one and the same time of the factors of scarcity of labour in parts, competition of employers, agricultural prosperity and higher prices has not produced an even greater effect on the remuneration of workers generally than is recorded by the statistics now collected.

D. B. BLAKEWAY,

Revenue Commissioner,

North-West Frontier Province.

TABLE A.

Rates of daily wages in annas and pies (including money value of any supplement in kind) most commonly paid to certain classes of labour in December 1912 and 1917, in the towns named, together with particulars of population, as at the last census, and the numerical strength of the respective classes of employment.

1		2	3		4	5		6
		Town—Peshawar. Population—97,935.			Town—Dera Ismail Khan Population—35,131.			
Class of ordinary skilled labour.		Numerical strength of class named.	Wages per diem.		Numerical strength of class named.	Wages per diem.		Remarks.
			As.	Ps.		As.	Ps.	
Workers in iron and hardware	Wages Census of 1912	57	18	0	108	19	0	
	" " 1917	40	20	0	38	24	0	
Brass, copper and bell metal workers...	" " 1912	99	24	0	39	16	0	
	" " 1917	120	20	0	40	14	0	
Carpenters	" " 1912	325	21	0	37	17	0	
	" " 1917	325	20	0	25	14	0	
Cotton weavers (hand industry)	" " 1912	309	12	0	5	5	0	
	" " 1917	309	20	0	9	10	0	
Masons and builders	" " 1912	600	20	0	137	16	0	
	" " 1917	440	20	0	230	17	0	
General labour (unskilled)	" " 1912	2,750	9	0	400	6	6	
	" " 1917	2,045	12	0	140	9	0	

TABLE. B

ural wage rates in the North-West Frontier Province, as determined by enquiry in December 1917, compared with the rates returned in 1912.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
District.	Unskilled labour by day.								Carpenter by day.		Black-smith by day.		Mason by day.		Ploughman by month.		Remarks.
	Cash.				Grain.												
	1912.		1917.		1912.		1917.		1912.	1917.	1912.	1917.	1912.	1917.	1912.	1917.	
	Range of typical rates.	Most common rates.	Range of typical rates.	Most common rates.	Value.	Weight.	Value.	Weight.									
	Annas.	Annas.	Annas.	Annas.	Annas.		Annas.		Annas.	Annas.	Annas.	Annas.	Annas.	Annas.	Rs.	Rs.	
a ...	4 to $5\frac{1}{4}$	5	5 to 8	6	...	...	...	...	10	16	12	16	8	16	...	...	
war ...	4 to 10	6	5 to 11	8	$7\frac{3}{4}$ / $4\frac{1}{4}$	Gur 4 lbs. with supplement worth Rs. 0-3-6. Maize 10 lbs.	6	Maize 11 lbs.	22	24	20	24	22	24	11	12	
...	3 to 8	5	5 to 9	8	5	Maize 12 lbs.	...	...	12	20	12	20	16	20	$7\frac{1}{2}$	8	
...	4 to 6	4	6 to 8	6	$4\frac{3}{4}$ / 4	Wheat 5 lbs. with supplement worth Rs. 0-3-0. Maize 12 lbs.	...	...	20	24	12	28	20	24	$9\frac{10}{16}$	12	
mail Khan...	3 to 8	6	4 to 10	8	...	...	$6\frac{1}{4}$	Wheat flour 1 lb. with supplement.	16	20	16	20	16	20	$6\frac{6}{16}$	8	

Form C.

The rates of daily wages in annas and pies (including money value of any supplements in kind) most commonly paid to agricultural labourers in selected villages of the districts of the North-West Frontier Province and the number of villages in which such rates are paid.

District.	Number of selected villages.	Rate of daily wage including value of payments in kind.	No. of villages in which the stated rate is familiar as a cash wage.		Number of villages in which the rate is familiar as a grain wage.	Total numbar of villages in which the stated rate prevails.	Ratio of total population of villages in question to total rural population of the district.
			Without supplement.	With supplement in kind.			
		As. P.					
Hazara	51	6 0	43	1	...	44	17 per cent.
Peshawar	180	8 0	59	36	...	95	51·5 „
Kohat	73	8 0	29	...	...	29	60·2 „
Bannu	34	6 0	24	...	...	24	32·6 „
Dera Ismail Khan ...	89	8 0	22	...	...	22	55·3 „

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